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Reflection – 2 Assignment

**How important is the literature review (and differentiating between various types of journals) and assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies?**

“A researcher cannot perform significant research without first understanding the literature in the field” (Boote & Beile, 2005, p.3). It is safe to say that almost no research (with the exception of some new technologies and scientific advancements) can be absolutely innovative and not have some kind of background or prior study. It is important to understand prior literature on the topic for a number of reasons. A literature review offers the knowledge of any research, findings, theories, and opinions that have been made in the field or on the researcher’s topic. A researcher can examine and analyze variant or opposing views and remain objective.

Analyzing literature review is an important step in determining one’s hypothesis and opinion. By examining previous research and theorists, a researcher can narrow down what variables he/she can incorporate in order to either validate prior research or theory, or to further progress the research on the topic. A deep analysis of the prior literature on the topic may sway the researcher to a different point of view than he/she originally planned to pursue.

Action researchers need to also analyze current instructional strategies to figure out if their intervention is applicable, already in place, or even needed. While prior research review might offer a number of opinions, current practices will provide the most current framework for the environment in which future research can be conducted as well as the nature of intervention.

From a reader’s point of view, the literature review is essential in grasping the topic at hand. When reading a literature review a reader will be able to get a firm background on the topic and the issue in the past, and better understand the current research presented to him/her. (USC Libraries, 2012)

The journals used in literature review and research can have a number of different origins. It is important to differentiate between the various types of journals in order to determine the reliability and validity of the source. Academic or scholarly journals are most often peer reviewed, meaning they have been read by and validated by peers and colleagues in the field. Academic journals can be identified by existence of an abstract, which is a short summary of the paper and an extensive reference list of works cited in the text. This does not discount the validity of the articles printed in respected trade journals and magazines, but peer-reviewed works have a higher standing in the professional and academic community. Articles from commercial and media based publications, such as public online blogs, newspapers, commercial magazines, need to be verified for the validity of the information printed.

The prime importance of peer-reviewed journals is that they present in-depth researches, both qualitative and quantitative, as well as analytical and theoretical papers that have strong (they matter in the scholarly world). These are considered important contributions to the field can be used in further researches.

References:

Boote, D.N., & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher.* 34(6), 3-15. Retrieved from <http://www.nku.edu/~lipping/EDG%20600/litreviewarticle.rtf>

University of Southern California (Updated October, 2012). Organizing your social science research paper. *USC Libraries,* 5. Retrieved from **http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide**